

NEW JERSEY POISON INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

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PRESS RELEASE

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Poison Center cautions consumers on the interaction of medication with alcohol use

Many medications can interact with alcohol, leading to increased risk of illness, injury or even death. With the cold and flu season upon us, consumers should be aware that the use of alcohol may effect their body, as well as interact with their medication.

Alcohol is a drug that when taken effects several organs of the body such as the brain, liver, and stomach. It can decrease reaction time and increase sedation. Furthermore, when taken along with prescription and or non-prescription medications, the potential for serious problems arise.

Alcohol enhances the drowsiness associated with antihistamines found in cough and cold medications, these effects including excessive dizziness and sedation, may become more pronounced in older persons. It also can increase the sedative effects of medications used for depression and anxiety. These types of interactions may impair the ability of people to perform work that requires alertness or the ability to drive and maintain good reflexes.

Taking non-prescription pain relievers and consuming alcohol can cause mild to severe stomach upset. When alcohol is taken with some antibiotics, interaction may occur producing severe stomach upset, flushing, increased heartbeat and breathing or the effectiveness of the medication may be reduced.

Over the counter and prescription drugs can impair driving performance. Combining alcohol with these medications can increase your risk for traffic accidents. Be aware check with your pharmacist or health care provider prior to consuming alcohol while taking over the counter or prescription medication.

NJPIES encourages consumers to exercise caution when drinking alcohol especially in combination with other medications.

For more information about the use of alcohol in combination with a particular medication, ask your doctor, pharmacist or call the NJ Poison center hotline at 1-800-POISON-1.



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1-800-POISON-1**

The Regional Drug and Poison Information Center for New Jersey, Designated as a Regional Poison Control Center and a Member, American Association Of Poison Control Centers